

GREYHOUND WELFARE & INTEGRITY COMMISSION

DISCIPLINARY ACTION DECISION

Date of decision:	29 April 2025
Decision-makers:	Senior Steward Zane Turner, Senior Steward Paul Van Gestel, and Senior Inspector Shelley Hancock
Name of relevant person:	Vera Matic
Rule no(s):	Rule 156(g)(iv) and Rule 156(f)(ii)
Charge(s):	<p>Charge 1 – R156(g)(iv)</p> <p>Ms Matic did a thing, which in the opinion of the Controlling Body, constitutes an offence, by assaulting a GWIC Inspector.</p> <p>Charges 2 and 3 – R156(f)(ii)</p> <p>Ms Matic did something, which in the opinion of the Controlling Body, constitutes negligence.</p> <p>Charges 4 and 5 – R156(g)(iv)</p> <p>Ms Matic did a thing which in the opinion of the Controlling Body, constitutes an offence, by threatening and obstructing a GWIC Inspector.</p> <p>Charge 6 – R156(f)(ii)</p> <p>Ms Matic did something, which in the opinion of the Controlling Body, constitutes misconduct.</p> <p>Charge 7 – R156(g)(iv)</p> <p>Ms Matic did a thing, which in the opinion of the Controlling Body, constitutes an offence, by obstructing a GWIC Inspector.</p> <p>Charge 8 – R156(f)(ii)</p> <p>Ms Matic did a thing, which in the opinion of the Controlling Body, constitutes misconduct.</p>

**Disciplinary action
taken:**

Charge 1 – To disqualify Ms Matic for 18 months;

Charge 2 – To disqualify Ms Matic for 3 years;

Charge 3 – To disqualify Ms Matic for 5 years;

Charge 4 – To disqualify Ms Matic for 6 months;

Charge 5 – To disqualify Ms Matic for 3 months;

Charge 6 – To disqualify Ms Matic for 4 months;

Charge 7 – To disqualify Ms Matic for 3 months;

Charge 8 – To disqualify Ms Matic for 4 months;

With the penalties to be served concurrently, and the net effect being a 5-year period of disqualification from the industry;

With the penalties being backdated to the commencement of the interim suspension served by Ms Matic, being 11 March 2024;

With the period of disqualification to expire at 11:59pm on 10 March 2029.

DECISION

1. Ms Matic was, at all relevant times, a registered Owner with the Greyhound Welfare and Integrity Commission (“**Commission**”).
2. On Thursday 10 April 2025, Ms Matic was issued with a Notice of Charge and Proposed Disciplinary Action (“**Notice**”), containing eight charges, pertaining to breaches of two rules of the Greyhound Racing Rules (“**Rules**”), which read:

Rule 156(g)(iv)

An offence is committed if a person (including an official):

...

- (f) has, in relation to a greyhound or greyhound racing, done something, or omitted to do something, which, in the opinion of a Controlling Body or the Stewards;

...

- ii. constitutes misconduct or is negligent or improper.

- (g) willfully assaults, obstructs, impedes, abuses, interferes with, threatens or insults;

...

- iv. a steward or any other official of a Controlling Body or a Club.

3. The charges can be summarised as follows:

Charge 1 On 26 February 2024, Ms Matic assaulted a GWIC inspector by striking a mobile phone out of the inspector’s hand.

- Charge 2** On or around 19 July 2023, Ms Matic negligently left a greyhound in her care ("**Greyhound 1**"), unsupervised and in an area of the house that was not enclosed. Greyhound 1 was attacked by other greyhound/s resulting in its death.
- Charge 3** On or around 1 May 2024, Ms Matic negligently left a greyhound in her care ("**Greyhound 2**"), either unsupervised and/or inappropriately supervised in the company of other greyhounds. Greyhound 2 was attacked by other greyhound/s, which resulted in Greyhound 2 receiving significant injuries. Ms Matic obtained veterinary treatment for Greyhound 2, but it subsequently died from those injuries.
- Charge 4** On 13 September 2023, Ms Matic verbally threatened a GWIC inspector attending for a kennel inspection.
- Charge 5** On 13 September 2023, Ms Matic obstructed a GWIC inspector attending for a kennel inspection.
- Charge 6** On 13 September 2023, Ms Matic engaged in misconduct by swearing at GWIC inspectors.
- Charge 7** On 26 February 2024, Ms Matic obstructed a GWIC inspector attending for a kennel inspection.
- Charge 8** On 26 February 2024, Ms Matic engaged in misconduct by swearing at GWIC inspectors.

4. On Tuesday 29 April 2025, Ms Matic attended a hearing at the Richmond Greyhound Club where she entered the following pleas:

Charges 1, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 – Guilty;

Charges 2 and 3 – Not guilty.

5. Following consideration of Ms Matic's pleas and submissions in respect of the charges, the decision makers found the charges proven. At that time in the hearing, decision makers provided Ms Matic with a Notice of Proposed Penalties, which outlined the penalties that they were considering imposing in relation to each offence. Ms Matic was invited to make submissions in respect of the proposed penalties.
6. Ms Matic elected not to respond or make submissions with regard to the proposed penalties. Ms Matic instead chose to leave the hearing room and to take no further part in the disciplinary proceedings.

7. The decision makers, satisfied that Ms Matic was provided every opportunity to respond to the proposed penalties, elected to proceed in finalising the hearing in her absence.
8. Taking into account Ms Matic's pleas of guilty to Charges 1 and 4 to 8, and her pleas of not guilty to Charges 2 and 3, the decision makers imposed the following penalties:

Charge 1 – 18-month disqualification;

Charge 2 – 3-year disqualification;

Charge 3 – 5-year disqualification;

Charge 4 – 6-month disqualification;

Charge 5 – 3-month disqualification;

Charge 6 – 4-month disqualification;

Charge 7 – 3-month disqualification; and

Charge 8 – 4-month disqualification.

Decision makers determined that the penalties are to be served concurrently, with the net effect being a total period of disqualification of 5-year from the industry

Decision makers determined to backdate the commencement date for the penalties to the date Ms Matic was first placed on an interim suspension, being 11 March 2024. Accordingly the period of disqualification will expire at 11:59pm on 10 March 2029.

9. In taking this disciplinary action, the decision-makers had regard to all relevant evidence and material, including:
 - Ms Matic's guilty pleas to Charges 1, 4 to 8 and not guilty pleas to Charges 2 and 3;
 - Ms Matic's lack of any submissions in respect of the proposed penalties. This was an important factor in determining not to reduce the penalties below what was proposed at the hearing;
 - Principles of general and specific deterrence;
 - The objective seriousness of the offences. Of particular note to decision makers was Ms Matic's negligence with regard to Charges 2 and 3, which was considered to be grossly negligent as it resulted in the death of two greyhounds in her care which were not under any effective supervision. The penalties imposed for Charges 2 and 3 reflect this.
 - The fact that Ms Matic engaged in negligence in July 2023 that resulted in the death of Greyhound 1, but then did not alter her practices. Instead, Ms Matic was again negligent in May 2024 resulting in the death of Greyhound 2. This was the reasoning for decision makers imposing a greater penalty for Charge 3, as they felt that Ms Matic ought to have been aware that her negligence in this way could cause the death of a greyhound in her care.

- The delay by the Commission in hearing the matter, which was considered when proposing penalties, in particular with respect to Charges 2 & 3 which, if heard expeditiously, would have attracted more significant penalties.

.....End.....